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1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9
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if the Chinese system of fertilization with human manure is used. The western part of the region is colder than
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the eastern part, being higher and more exposed to north-western winds, but in spite of the small climatic difference, spelt wheat, a small amount of millet, and large crops of linseed and colza are grown nearly everywhere. On the colder, western side, the earth has to be "warmed" by plowing and cultivation; when new fields are opened to agriculture, various kinds of crops have to be grown for the first seven years; only then does the earth become warm enough to grow wheat.

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The northern slopes of the highest mountains are covered in many places with a fair growth of timber, principally spruce, and brush; poplars, willows, and sometimes birch are plentiful in the lower valleys. The
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economic life of the country during the period covered by this study was principally agricultural and only secondarily pastoral, although pastoralism prevails in the highest, coldest, part of the country.

[P. 18 c]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

IX. PUBLIC RITES

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN REGARD TO HAILSTORMS

In the mind of the Monguors is seared the belief in an incredibly prodigious medley of gods, malignant spirits, and ferocious ghosts, and consequently all events in life, happy or unhappy, must be approached from that angle.

In this chapter will be considered the calamity most dreaded by the Monguors, which does the most harm and ruins them most frequently. It is the scourge of hailstorms, which every year ruin the crops of many villages, reducing the already narrow margin of subsistence of the villagers to a minimum, and bringing many families to the verge of famine.

It is obvious that this calamity is supposedly caused by malignant spirits and it is no wonder that the whole religious energy of the people is bent on securing all available means and ways to avoid disaster. No wonder that the people, scared to death, seek refuge in religion against a scourge caused by evil spirits—first of all in the religion credited with the greatest potency, without refusing the help of others less potent, imploring the aid of good spirits, and engaging in a life and death struggle with the evil spirits.

In all their village temples, accordingly, one encounters the picture of the god of the Five Roads, the Taoist combatant of hailstorms, amidst the awful scenery previously described, whether or not the temple is dedicated to it. The shaman is invited to perform his most efficient rites against hail because he is believed the most conspicuous for his great abilities in the field. All the Taoist spirits, to whom temples in the country are dedicated, are invited by the shaman to come down into the temple yard and to participate in the performance of the rite in spring. The shaman conveys to them the sympathy of the villagers and their gracious offer of hospitality, in order that they might help their village, and after the shamanist rites have been performed the villagers still indulge in Lamaist activities against hailstorms.

No wonder that, from New Year's on, the villagers are obsessed by the problem, and never fail where a Kurtain is possessed by the god of the Five Roads, to invite him on the third day of the year for an exhibition

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the study of F. Franz Eichinger, Kinderlosigkeit und ihre Bekämpfung in der Volksmedizin, *ibid.* 167 sq., is very instructive and unique. The author, during two years as member of the Chinese Health Committee in Ming-hsien, Lin t'ao, Ho-chou, and Labrang (East Kansu), traveled four months with the committee in the region of Hsining, Kung-ho, Hsing-hai (Monguor territory) and seized the exceptional opportunity to gather ethnological notes, which open vistas in this special field and give a better understanding of the frame of mind of the family concerning this capital topic; the care of children, the means of getting this blessing, the fear of being bereaved of them and the physical causes of this bereavement.